

NSC BRIEFING

26 January 1955

OFFSHORE ISLANDS

- I. Situation fairly quiet since fall Ichang (18 Jan).

B. Thus, major attacks on any or all remaining Tachens possible at any time prior Nationalist evacuation.

- II. Current 7th Fleet plans for evacuation of two principal Tachens require 5 - 7 days for job.

NAVY review(s) completed.

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III. ChiComs have capability disrupt evacuation.

A. Could bomb Tachens beaches, US and Nat ships, could also hit ships with subs, torpedo-boats, could lay artillery fire on Tachens and harbor between.

B. [REDACTED] "We believe it is unlikely that the Communists would deliberately attack US forces engaged in the evacuation of Nationalist garrisons, but the possibility of a serious incident cannot be excluded."

IV. Elsewhere among offshore islands, ChiComs might move quickly against Matsus [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
while US and Nat forces tied up with Tachens list.

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- However, believe ChiComs would prefer move additional naval, air strength into Matsu area before trying assault.
- B. In meantime, expect ChiComs to probe, as test US intentions defend Matsus.
 - C. Probing could include attacks on Nat shipping, air harassment, shelling by artillery to north.
- V. As to Quemoy, where Nats have over 50,000 troops, ChiComs appear unprepared for assault at this time.
- A. ChiComs now have about 60,000 troops in area opposite Quemoy. Would probably want to move in two more armies (100,000); would also want strong air, naval support not now available.
 - B. Communists nonetheless expected to test US intentions re Quemoy, as with Matsus.
 - C. Such probing could include heavy shelling, use of torpedo boats, other craft, or assaults on lightly-held minor islands (Tatan, Erhtan).